The Quality of Latin American Philosophy Debate

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In the twentieth century, many Latin American philosophers held skeptical positions about the very existence and quality of their own field of inquiry. Recently, a new skepticism has appeared in connection with the attempt by some Mexican philosophers to raise two "invisibility problems" for Latin American philosophy. Old and new skeptics in both halves of the Americas have both wondered about the reasons for the absence of internationally recognized philosophers in Latin America -- of the caliber of, for example, Willard van Orman Quine in North America. In this paper, I acknowledge such absence but argue that this fact need not be taken to support that there is something wrong with Latin American philosophy. After pointing out some deficits in recent attempts to substantiate that skeptical conclusion, I provide an alternative account that avoids normative conclusions about Latin American philosophy's quality.

I. Historical Background

It is undeniable that philosophy exists *in* Latin America as a discipline and profession autonomous from science, theology, literature, politics, education, and other disciplines or practices (hereafter, simply 'disciplines'). And no one questions that Latin American philosophy meets current Western standards of proper representation in the Hispanic world's educational systems, learned societies, associations, journals, presses, etc. The only factual issue yet to be settled concerns its origins. When did it begin? Two apparently rival answers have been offered. Some maintain that its real origins are in the early twentieth century, since it was not until then

that there was evidence of the existence of autonomous philosophy in Latin America, sometimes referred to as 'philosophy as such' or 'strict philosophy.' Previously, it had not been practiced for its own sake but was subordinated to non-philosophical interests, chiefly in literature, politics, and education. On the other hand, according to others, its origins are in the sixteenth century with the introduction of Scholasticism by Iberian educators and theologians.[1]

But these positions are not really incompatible, since Latin American philosophy may have colonial origins when construed broadly, and contemporary origins when construed narrowly. Reasons for leaving colonial Scholasticism out of strict philosophy include this movement's main motivation, which was education, and the mostly imitative nature of its developments. The philosophy that came after independence from Spain and Portugal in the early nineteenth century also fails to qualify as strict because it was not practiced for its own sake, but rather subordinated to political and pedagogical interests. Between the 1910s and the 40s, however, a generation of philosophers known as the 'fundadores' or 'forjadores' (hereafter 'Founders') began to practice it for its own sake, thereby turning it into an autonomous discipline within academia. They also created standard professional organizations and institutions devoted to philosophy and achieved recognition for it in the wider community. For all these achievements, they credited themselves with having brought "normalidad" (normalcy, understood as standardization) to philosophy in the region, by which they meant making its practice similar to that prevailing in academic philosophy in the West. At that point in recent history, there was no question that philosophy existed *in* Latin America. But was it any good?

A prominent skeptical view about this question emerged among those Founders who reflected on the quality of Latin American philosophy. By comparing its achievements with

[1] The first view can be found in, for example, Romero 1944, Frondizi 1949, and Miró Quesada 1974; the second view in Gracia et al. 1995 and Hurtado 2007.

those of North American or European philosophy, they tended to agree with the following skeptical thesis:

> **Skepticism** (**S1)**: Only a very small part of Latin American philosophy, if any part at all, is of value.

One of the first Latin American philosophers to endorse **S1** was Brazilian Euryalo Cannabrava, who in 1927 arrived at this thesis by comparing the qualities of his local philosophy with those of North American philosophy. On his view, Latin American philosophy was based on nothing more than sophistry and a kind of literary thinking far removed from the strict rules of reasoning followed so closely by North American philosophers. Consistent with this assessment is Cannabrava's explanation of the attractiveness of continental philosophy to Latin American philosophers, which at the time meant mostly contemporary offshoots of German idealism (construed broadly to include phenomenology and existentialism). Cannabrava (p. 114) believed that Latin American philosophers were attracted to this philosophical tradition precisely because of its "lack of intelligibility," and "its metaphysical abuses and frequent violation of the rules of correct thinking." Latin American philosophy was at its worst when addressing issues in philosophy of science. Here Cannabrava illustrates his claim by reference to Mexican Antonio Caso's writings on science, which on Cannabrava's view show an absence of any "real acquaintance with …[its] development or technique" (p. 117). All these shortcomings led Cannabrava to lament that "[i]n Latin America we do not have philosophers like Morris Cohen, Victor Lenze, Ernest Nagel, and F. S. C. Northrop, who have studied the sources of science and followed closely its development..."

Let's assume that, at the time of Cannabrava's list, at least Nagel could perhaps somehow be equated with what I would call 'a Quine.' Cannabrava's conclusion, which is consistent with **S1**, combines the factual with the evaluative. For to put it in our context, it doesn't simply state a matter of (putative) fact – viz., that Latin America does not have internationally recognized philosophers like Quine. It also has the normative connotation that there is something wrong with Latin American philosophy. In order to explain what is wrong with it, Cannabrava appeals to factors concerning the origins and history of the discipline in Latin America, which speak of its development in connection with literature and the arts, where precise reasoning and linguistic clarity are intentionally avoided. By contrast, in the English-speaking world, the development of philosophy connects it with the formal and the empirical sciences, where precise reasoning and clear language are important values. Call this explanation of Latin American philosophy's shortcomings 'the genealogical explanation.' I'll have more to say about it later.

II. Originalism

During the first half of the twentieth century, only a small number of philosophers in Latin America were, like Cannabrava, attracted to the analytic tradition. Partly because of this, those Founders who held the skeptical thesis **S1** would give a different reason for their bleak conclusion. On their view, the main problem facing philosophy in the region was neither the lack of sound reasoning nor lack of linguistic clarity but lack of originality. In 1949, Argentinian Risieri Frondizi made an influential attempt at showing that this problem was indeed pervasive. On the evidence, Frondizi claimed, only 10% of strict philosophy in Latin America was original. The discipline had no significant history, theories, or methods. But most importantly, it had no

really creative practitioners. Although, like Cannabrava, Frondizi was committed to **S1,** his reason for this thesis was then 'originalism,' the view that to be taken seriously, philosophical works must be original in some of the ways to be considered below.

Given originalism, there is no Quine in Latin American philosophy simply because this discipline has not been sufficiently creative: it has not introduced innovative points of view. The lack of originality in Latin America philosophy, which entails the **S1** thesis, has been a popular view among twentieth century Latin American philosophers -- not only among philosophers and phenomenologists but also among Marxists and others. In fact, in 1925 (two years before Cannabrava's critique) Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui expressed a similarly bleak view of Latin American philosophy grounded in Marxist reasoning. He argued for **S1** from a factual premise about the cultural and economic dependence of Latin America and the assumption that a region cannot have interesting philosophy unless it has achieved independence on both counts. In 1968, Peruvian Augusto Salazar Bondy offered a more sophisticated Marxist argument along the lines suggested by Mariátegui. I have shown the vulnerability of this line of argument elsewhere (Nuccetelli 2003). But more needs to be said against its skeptical conclusion, **S1**, since at the end of the day it is undeniable that Latin American philosophy has not produced figures of Quine's caliber. What, if anything, is wrong with this discipline?

Originalists did of course think there was something wrong with it: its lack of sufficient originality. But, wary of simplistic explanations, they took pains to clarify what is meant by 'originality.' In 1968, Salazar Bondy published a small but influential book devoted entirely to the question. It provides a meticulous analysis of the property *originality*, which is distinguished from other properties such as *authenticity* and *peculiarity*, all considered relevant to the question at hand. This book was Bondy's contribution to the classic debate about Latin American

philosophy's quality that took part in the second half of the twentieth century. In the course of this debate, participants have defined the relevant properties of a philosophy as follows:[2]

(1) 'Original' – a philosophy that is *creative or novel*;

(2) 'Authentic' – a philosophy that is *genuine* or *non-spurious*; and

(3) 'Peculiar' – a philosophy that is *autochthonous* in the sense of being related to a certain region.

Some anti-skeptics in that debate identified themselves with a tradition I call 'distinctivism' according to which Latin America philosophy has property (3). Skeptics have replied that (3) is neither necessary nor sufficient for having (1) or (2). Other relationships that can be drawn among (1), (2) and (3) include that having (2) is necessary but not sufficient for having (1): a work that, by being genuine, has (2) may lack (1) if it fails to be creative, and also (3) if its author or topic is not related in some relevant sense to Latin America. Yet a philosophical work that lacks (2) by being imitative or result from, say, plagiarism would lack also (1) may nonetheless have (3) provided it shows some relation to Latin America. Having (1) is clearly neither necessary nor sufficient for having (3), but is sufficient for having (2).

More recently, Mexican Guillermo Hurtado (2007) and other Mexican philosophers of skeptical persuasion (hereafter, 'the new skeptics') have added a fourth property to the list of good-making features a philosophy should have and Latin American philosophy allegedly lacks:

(4) 'Being tradition-generating' -- a philosophy that *has generated a paradigm for subsequent philosophical work.*

After arguing that Latin American philosophy lacks this property, new skeptics conclude that **S1** is true. They also think that it lacks properties (1) and (2). But what about (3)? Would its

[2] For textual evidence, see Nuccetelli 2013.

possession by Latin American philosophy justify the dismissal of skeptical thesis S1, as the distinctivists believe?

Famously championed by Leopoldo Zea in a number of works, distinctivism is an anti-skeptical position popular also with other Mexican philosophers of his generation. Although distinctivists acknowledge that their discipline has been imitative, they argue that peculiarity is sufficient for (1) originality, which in turn does not require (2) authenticity.[3] Yet there is no good reason for thinking that peculiarity entails originality. After all, as defined above, 'peculiarity' is a purely descriptive concept while 'originality' is usually a term of praise used to express what's call in ethics a 'thick' concept, partly descriptive, partly evaluative. When we say that a philosophy is original, we are not only saying that is creative or novel but also that these features are something good. Since the same applies to properties (2) and (4), from the peculiarity of Latin American philosophy, nothing would follow about its being original, authentic, or tradition-generating. In this way, the new skeptics can resist the distinctivist reply. If they could also meet the non-distinctivist objection that his paper raises below, they would have no difficulty in substantiating the skeptical argument, which invokes originalism to support the skeptical thesis **S1** with the following argument

Skeptical Argument SA:

1. Most, if not all, Latin American philosophy lacks good-making features such as property (4), being tradition-generating.
2. For any philosophy to be of value, it must have this feature.

[3] Distinctivists argue that Latin American philosophy has peculiarity because its philosophers mostly come from a Latin American context and this context "permeates" their works. But then they make the doubtful claim that its peculiarity will lead to its originality, which Latin American philosophy is bound to develop "por añadidura" (i.e. in addition). See for example Zea 1991 and my 2003 objections to his argument.

3. Therefore, only a very small part of Latin American philosophy, if any part at all, is of value.

As we shall see next, given the new skepticism, a main reason for Latin American philosophy's deficit in property (4) is that it also lacks (1) and (2) – while (3) can be ignored because, as we have seen, it is too weak to support anti-skeptical conclusions. So both skeptics, the new and the old, agree on the basic charges to the quality of Latin American philosophy. But the new skeptics contribute to that debate something new: viz., a focus on its practitioners' incapability to generate philosophical dialog among themselves and with North American and European philosophers.

III. Two Invisibility Problems

Among the versions of **SA**'s premise (1) put forward by new skeptics, the one offered by Carlos Pereda (2006) breaks it Latin American philosophy's deficits on good-making feature 4 into two invisibility problems:

> **Problem 1: External Invisibility (EI) --** Philosophers working in North America and other major centers of Western philosophy do not regularly and seriously consider contributions by their Latin American peers.
>
> **Problem 2: Internal Invisibility (II) --** Philosophers working in Latin America do not regularly and seriously consider contributions by their own Latin American peers.

Given **II**, Latin American philosophers' works have no impact on the works of their Latin American peers; and given **EI**, they have no impact on those of other Western peers. Evidence

from **II** stems from facts such that, in Latin America, philosophical traditions are imported from major centers of Western philosophy, don't last very long, and those working on a certain tradition failed to establish philosophical dialog among themselves – let alone with their peers working on different traditions. Although new skeptics have made little effort to provide support for these claims beyond anecdotal evidence,[4] it is undeniable that Latin American philosophers don't make sufficient reference to their peers' work in their publications, papers presented at conferences, etc. Let's provisionally concede the **II** problem and turn to the support for **EI**, external invisibility. Here the evidence seems beyond dispute: no work by a Latin American philosopher has been tradition originating in a way remotely analogous to the work of Quine.

Yet since **II** and **IE** point to *factual* problems, an anti-skeptic may reply that they cannot entail, either individually or jointly, skeptical conclusion **S1**: that there is something wrong with Latin American philosophy. There is room for accepting the existence of both problems while saying the skeptic, 'So what?' or 'Why should Latin American philosophers care? But this reply is need of further support since even when the existence of problems **II** and **EI** does not entail the skeptics' conclusion, which is evaluative, it does provide non-deductive grounds for it. The argument now runs

> **Normative Skepticism** (**NS):** The two invisibility problems facing Latin American philosophy, **II** and **EI**, suggest that there is something wrong with it.

NS appears a plausible recast of **SA** above. Let's now consider how the new skeptics attempt to support its premise. Pereda 2006 charges that some vices of "arrogant reasoning" afflicting the work of Latin American philosophers are responsible for the **II** and **EI** problems. Here we need

[4] Pereda 2006 is an exception, since he appeals to data from the Enciclopedia iberoamericana de filosofía, a multivolume, ongoing publication that begun in Spain in 1987, where almost no reference to works of Latin American philosophers can be found in the volumes devoted to general subjects.

to assume that Pereda is referring to most, but not all, Latin American philosophers as having such negative traits of intellectual character. The group should include neither Pereda nor other new skeptics who have similar views, since otherwise, their views would be self-defeating.[5] The vice-affected philosophers that Pereda has in mind are either distinctivists or universalists. Unlike the distinctivists, the universalists deny that philosophical theories, methods, and topics can be peculiar or relative to regions, persons, groups, or cultures. According to Pereda, their vices of arrogant reason consists in "subaltern fervor" and "craving for novelty," while the vice of distinctivists is "nationalist enthusiasm." On his prognosis, fixing the **EI** and **II** problems facing Latin American philosophy would require to purge these traits of its practitioners' intellectual character.

Another skeptic attempting to support the existence of at least the **II** problem for Latin American philosophy is Eduardo Rabossi, who charges most of its practitioners fall into the category of "periphery philosophers." These have the self-image or attitude of '*guachos*,' an Argentinian slang term used to designate anyone who is both an orphan and street urchin. *Guacho* philosophers not only fail to acknowledge their own "philosophical parents," they do not want to know about them at all. As Rabossi puts it, a *guacho* philosopher "doesn't take them [the philosophical parents] into account, he doesn't read them, he is not even interested in criticizing their defects or limitations; for him, his own philosophical past doesn't exist" (2008: 103, my translation). Lacking awareness of their own philosophical past and unwilling to establish dialogue with local peers, this philosopher can have neither philosophical traditions nor genuine

[5] Pereda needs to restrict the scope of his skepticism about Latin American philosophy to avoid making self-defeating claims. After all, if all Latin American philosophers have bad traits of intellectual character, as a Latin American philosopher himself, Pereda would have them too. Therefore, if he is right, we should reject his claims (as well as the claims of other new skeptics).

philosophical communities. If Rabossi is right, then at the very least there is a serious impediment for Latin American philosophy to be tradition originating.

Hurtado makes his own attempt at substantiated both problems, the **II** and the **EI**, in the case of Mexican philosophy, but his reasoning also applies by extension to Latin American philosophy as whole (2006: 206 *ff*.; 2007: 24 *ff*.). According to Hurtado, at the roots of problem II, internal invisibility, is the prevalent model for doing philosophy in Latin America, the "modernizing model." It creates bad traits of intellectual character among its followers, including a proclivity to form small groups and spend most of the time trying to learn some imported philosophy, to cite only foreign philosophers without paying much attention to regional peers, and to adopt the latest philosophical fashion with which they uncritically replace previous traditions. At the end of the day, in Latin American philosophy "…each modernizing movement got lost for the upcoming movement…" without creating either traditions or stable communities of dialogue (Hurtado 2006: 206). "But the foreign philosophers," laments Hurtado, "even those who visit our countries to deliver talks, very rarely quote us in their work. There is therefore no genuine dialogue…" (2006: 205). In this way, Hurtado is acknowledging that there is **IE** for Latin American philosophy, but he thinks it will continue to exist "unless we create a genuine critical dialogue among ourselves and simultaneously exercise a constantly renewed memory of past dialogues" (2006: 210). Thus the **II** problem needs to be fixed first.

On this, Mexican new-skeptic Maite Ezcurdia (2003) disagrees: if it is true that most Latin American philosophers are driven by the modernizing model, reasons Ezcurdia, then it is rather the **EI** problem that must be fixed first. Since she agrees with Hurtado that most Latin American philosophers do in fact work within the modernizing-model frame of mind, it follows that they would be motivated to consider their peers' works only after some of these works have

acquired international recognition. So Ezcurdia contends that fixing the **EI** is bound to result eventually in correcting the **II** problem too. Be that as it may, Ezcurdia fully endorses the new skeptics' argument **NS**, which she thinks is also supported by the absence of certain kinds of originality in the works of Latin American philosophers. On her view, there are four kinds of originality corresponding to four non-overlapping properties that are desirable in philosophy anywhere: interpretative, argumentative, problem-making, and problem-solving originality. Latin American philosophers have on the whole been successful at interpreting the works of philosophers in major centers of the West, which counts as evidence of having interpretative originality. But she finds them lacking in originality of the other three kinds. Ezecurdia's brief diagnosis of these problems for Latin American philosophy quickly leads to a recommendation about how to fix its **EI** and **II** problems: namely, by means of fostering originality of the other three types. In particular, improvements in problem-solving originality are needed.

Pereda's recommendation for fixing the **II** and **EI** problems is less clear. He suggests Latin American philosophers should emulate the work of Latin American essayists, who have succeeded in establishing a dialogue among each other and with world culture. At the same time, he appears to draw a bright line between the philosophical essay, and strict philosophy, since he appears reluctant to count as philosophy the non-academic philosophical works produced by, for example, essayists such as Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes.

In any case, like Ezcurdia and Pereda, other new skeptics make explicit or implicit recommendations to solve the **II** and **EI** problems, from which we can infer that their skepticism about Latin American philosophy is not as radical as the skepticism of Cannabrava and Frondizi. Whether for modesty or common sense, neither of these made such recommendations – leaving us wondering whether they thought a solution was possible at all.

IV. Against Normative Skepticism

There are, however, reasons to think that, if new skepticism is true, any recommendations about how to fix the **II** and **IE** problems for Latin American philosophy is futile. For one thing, by all counts, universalism is a widely held and probably majority view in Latin American philosophy (Miró Quesada 1978: 76, Salazar Bondy 1968: 49 ff.). If Pereda is right about universalism's vices, since it is a widely held view, the intellectual character of most Latin American philosophers have the bad traits of subaltern fervor and craving for novelty. As a result, they per force devote considerable time and effort to assimilating the latest fads coming from the US and Europe (something about which Pereda agrees with other new skeptics). It is hopeless to think that these philosophers can devote themselves to reform their intellectual characters and produce work that is original to a significant degree. Such activities would require a considerable amount of motivation, time and effort that the universalists lack. They are already too busy learning and abandoning traditions, replacing them with new fads that they try to assimilate, only to abandon them in short order and begin all over again. (Someone once told me that there is a new philosophical fad every ten years!) Thus there seems to be an empirical constraint for the universalists to follow Pereda/Hurtado/Ezcurdia recommendations for improving the Latin American philosophers' intellectual character or their critical thinking skills[6].

Furthermore, the new skepticism is vulnerable to several strong ad hominem, all focused on the fact the new-skeptics' recommendations falls into the very problem they are designed to

[6] To my knowledge, Rabossi made no such recommendation. If so, his claims about the prevalence of *guacho* philosophers in Latin America seem to support radical skepticism about the quality of Latin American philosophy.

fix -- namely, the lack of dialogue between philosophers inside Latin America and between these and their peers in North America and Europe. Here are the objections:

Ad hominem against the new skeptics claim that Latin American philosophy faces the internal invisibility (II) problem

Case #1: The new skeptics themselves never engage with, or at any rate acknowledge, the arguments and subtle conceptual distinctions of Latin American philosophers within the same skeptical tradition. Notoriously absent in their work is philosophical dialog with the old skepticism. As suggested at the beginning of this essay, this tradition originated in the work of philosophers of different persuasions who have produced a rich set of arguments questioning the quality of Latin American philosophy. Cannabrava's and Frondizi's views considered above are merely the tip of the iceberg. When the new skeptics address the same issue, their references, if present at all, are only to the work of other new skeptics. A notable absence in their discussions is Salazar Bondy's subtle analysis of originality as a concept and as a property of Latin American philosophy – even when, his discussion is especially relevant, for example, to Ezcurdia's four types of originality.

Case #2: On the issue of how to improve the quality of Latin American philosophy, although there is a great deal of overlap among the new skeptics' own recommendations, with a few exceptions they neither acknowledge each other's works nor join forces to bust their capacity of being tradition generating . Once again, the new skeptics' attitudes illustrate the very problem they are trying to fix.

Ad hominem against the new skeptics claim that Latin American philosophy faces the external invisibility (EI) problem

> The new skeptics invariably ignore what their peers in North America are arguing about the same subject matter – namely, the quality of Latin American philosophy. To cite but one example, consider Jorge Gracia's 2003 charge that originalism amounts to an unreasonable demand on any philosophy. If the charge is right, then at the very least Ezcurdia's proposal collapses. Or take Gracia's argument for construing Latin American philosophy as an ethnic philosophy, which, if sound, would undermine new skepticism as a whole by relaxing the quality requirement that Latin American philosophy be tradition-generating. Although these and other arguments by peers in North America bear directly on the quality of Latin American philosophy, they are ignored by the new skeptics, whose argumentative strategies systematically fall into the very problems they are designed to fix.

I submit that these are strong ad hominem against the new skeptical argument that there is something wrong with Latin American philosophy from the premise that it faces the **II** and **EI** problems. The new skeptics' own approach to the debate about this discipline's quality is undermined by being their failing to establish the sort of internal and external dialog they consider indicative of having any philosophical value.

V. Conclusion

On the other hand, there is abundant textual evidence that the quality of Latin American philosophy debate has generated intense debate among its practitioners. As a result, there are significant skeptical and anti-skeptical traditions about that discipline. The above considered attempts at substantiating new skepticism (Pereda's, Rabossi's, Hurtado's, and Ezcurdia's) are proof of the currency of an old skeptical tradition among Latin American philosophers regarding the quality of their field. This by itself amounts to a counterexample to the claim that Latin American philosophy lacks the property of being tradition generating. It follows that Latin American philosophy does after all have some stable philosophical traditions and communities of the sort commonly found in, for example, North American philosophy. In light of the evidence provided here, **II** is false.

The **EI** thesis, however, points to a fact made vivid by Cannabrava's concern about the absence of internationally recognized philosophers in Latin America. True, Latin American philosophy has no Quine. While in graduate school in the US, my fellow students asked me, on more than one occasion, why? Cannabrava offered a genealogical explanation that amounts to a Kuhnean answer, of course years before T. S. Kuhn's 1962 book. It invokes external factors concerning the history of philosophy in Latin America. Although his answer was quick and superficial, it pointed in the right direction. On my view, it is ultimately for historians and sociologists of philosophy to determine the exact factors that made it possible for North America to have many internationally recognized philosophers and scientists, and Latin America to have only a few – and none as influential as Quine. Note that Cannabrava's explanation is consistent with the Founders' view of Latin American philosophy: before the twentieth century, it developed subordinated to others interests, chiefly literature and the arts. Positivism did not have the same an impact in all the regions that adopted that philosophy. While in North America and

the UK it secured for philosophy some long-established methodological connections with the sciences, both formal and natural, in Latin America it was often put at the service of failed dictatorial adventures, with disastrous consequences for some countries. That only fostered resentment towards science among intellectuals of the region, which in turn accounts for the rapid spread of the anti-positivist view known as 'Arielism' among the youth in the early 1900s.[7] In the meantime, the lingering influence of positivism in North America and the UK, together with Moore and Russell's rejection of idealism in the early twentieth century, laid the foundations of contemporary analytic philosophy by fostering developments such as logical positivism and logical atomism during the early days of philosophy of language and symbolic logic.

More of course needs to be said. Any complete account should also factor in economic and cultural elements. Among the former is the fact that the greater wealth of private and public universities in North America enabled access to libraries and other research resources unavailable in Latin America. Furthermore, through an accident of history, the North has come to hold a linguistic advantage. English has become the *lingua franca* of the philosophical community, as well as a barrier for many Latin American philosophers who wish to publish in the best journals and with the publishers who can best promote their work in an international forum. At the end of the day, then, the question of why there is no Quine in Latin American philosophy turns out to be of no philosophical interest. If I am right, it has a solely factual answer that can be found only by historical and sociological research. When intended as normative, it is a fallacious complex question presupposing that there is something wrong with Latin American philosophy. This cannot be assumed without argument. And of several arguments for that

[7] The Arielists' plain hostility toward the sciences sprang of Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó's Ariel, a neo-romantic narrative closer to literature than philosophy. The book pitches aesthetics values against the scientific values of North America, which are misrepresented as part of "utilitarianism."

conclusion examined here, only those pointing to the lack of international recognition for Latin American philosophy are supported by the evidence. But again, far from being normative, their conclusion refers to facts to be accounted for by the social sciences.

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